Toward war's end, with the Russians closing in on Riga, the Germans began to move their Jewish captives around. Ziering believes that the SS in fact connived to keep small groups of Jews alive, so that the need to guard them would keep the Germans from being sent to the front.

The Zierings were moved to a German prison, Fuhlsbüttel, on the outskirts of Hamburg. Prison living conditions were a distinct step up. But every week the Germans would load eight or ten Jews into a truck and transport them to Bergen-Belsen for elimination. ''With German precision,'' says Ziering, the guards went at their job alphabetically—and never got to ''Z.''

British troops then closed off Bergen-Belsen, and the Germans marched their remaining Jews to a Kiel concentration camp, whose commandant's first words upon seeing them were: ''I can't believe that Jews still exist.'' The camps grisly conditions killed 40 to 50 inmates daily. Another 35 males were murdered when they could not run a kilometer while carrying a heavy piece of wood. Sigi and his brother passed that test.

Then, as the Zierings heard the story, Count Folke Bernadotte of Sweden offered to pay Heinrich Himmler $5 million for 1,000 Jews. (Whether the Count indeed made this offer or paid the money is not clear.) A German officer told the Ziering boys, who believed it not at all, that they were to be included but were unpresentable in the striped clothing they wore. Sigi and his brother were taken to a mortuary, where they were directed to strip the clothes from the corpses that lay there and make them their own. And on May 1, 1945, Red Cross workers arrived to take the 1,000 to Sweden. The route lay through Copenhagen, and at its railroad station, the Jews heard excited shouts: ''Hitler is dead.''

As if he'd suddenly awakened from a nightmare of unimaginable horror, Sigi then entered into a world of near-normalcy for a 17-year-old. His family managed to reunite in London, where the father—''a fantastic businessman,'' says Sigi—was doing well as a diamond merchant. Sigi, a bare five years of elementary education behind him, entered a tutorial school and then the University of London. He wished to be a doctor but found that almost all medical school spots were reserved for war veterans—the kind who'd worn military insignia, not tattooted numbers.

Hunting opportunity, the Ziering family made it to the U.S. in 1949, settling in Brooklyn. Working part-time, Sigi earned a physics degree at Brooklyn College and then two advanced degrees at Syracuse University. In those college years, he met the woman he soon married, Marilyn Brisman. When they first met, she says, he was ''quiet, sweet, introspective,'' and, with his blond hair, blue eyes, and accent, so resembled the archetype of a young German that she briefly thought him one.

Exiting academe in 1957, Ziering did nuclear-reactor work with Raytheon in Boston and then space projects at Allied Research. The entrepreneurial urge hit, and with a friend he started a company called Space Sciences to carry out cost-plus government contracts.

It was the heyday of avaricious conglomerates, and in 1968 Whittaker Corp. bought Space Sciences for about $1.8 million. That made Ziering, not yet 25 years removed from the terrifying alphabetical lock step of Fuhlsbüttel prison, well-to-do. But the deal also made him a California-based research executive restless in Whittaker's conglomerate culture.

He left and tried one entrepreneurial venture, the making of fishmeal, that failed. Then, in 1973, he heard by chance of a chemist working out of his Los Angeles kitchen, Robert Ban, who'd developed radioimmunoassay (RIA) diagnostic kits that permitted the measurement of infinitesimally low concentrations of substances—drugs and hormones, for example—in bodily fluids. Ban, a man with big ideas and a corporate name to match them, Diagnostic Products Corp., had been advertising in a professional journal that he had upwards of 30 different RIA kits available. Some of these, says Ziering, ''do not exist to this day,'' but that was not known to the journal's readers, and sacks of orders—though only morsels of money—landed in Ban's kitchen.

Ziering, warmed to the gamble by his longstanding interest in medicine, put $50,000 into the business and moved the chemist into a small factory that mainly produced one kit of particular commercial value. The business took off. But the partners were not getting along. So Ziering bought the chemist out for $25,000 and settled back to working with a more compatible partner, his wife, who has throughout the years been a DPC marketing executive.

Today their company, competing with such giants as Abbott Laboratories, has more than 1,400 employees and is a leading manufacturer of both diagnostic kits and the analytical instruments needed to read their findings. The company had 1997 sales of $186 million and profits of $18 million. DPC went public in 1982, though Ziering wishes it hadn't—the company has never really needed the money it raised, and he doesn't like the volatility of the market or the second-guessing of analysts—and he, his wife, their two sons (both in the business), and two daughters own about 24% of its stock, currently worth about $95 million.

Through most of its years, DPC has done well internationally, a fact that has required Ziering and his wife to travel often to Germany. Yes, it bothers him to go back, but he thinks that his encounters with young Germans disturb them more than him. When they get a hint of how he spent the war, he says, ''you can feel the static electricity in the air.''

In his business, says Marilyn Ziering, her husband is patient and visionary, but also a risk taker when he needs to be. He himself says he's a workaholic and muses as to why. He wonders whether the ''training'' of the Holocaust—''unless you work, you are destined for the gas chamber''—may not have permanently bent him and many other survivors to work.

The license plate on Ziering's Jaguar reads ''K9HORA.'' That's a rough phonetic rendition of kayn aynhoreh, a Yiddish expression meaning ''ward off the evil eye.'' It is customarily tacked to the end of a thought, as a superstitious precaution.

For these five survivors, who picked themselves up from the worst and darkest of beginnings and triumphed in the best tradition of the American dream, we might say, for example: ''Since the Holocaust, the lives of these men have been good—kayn aynhoreh.''

Or we might stitch those words to a larger thought. Of the Holocaust, Jews and the world say, ''Never again.'' In the histories of these five men, there is a ringing, opposite kind of message: ''Ever again.'' Evil weighed down their early lives. But it did not—and cannot—crush the human spirit.

Kayn aynhoreh.

WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY: COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 1998

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 70 and the San Diego Construction & Building Trades Council, as they are honored by the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council, AFL–CIO for their contributions to the labor movement and to the community as a whole.

The Labor Council's ''Community Service Award'' again goes to the National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 70 for its sixth consecutive and most successful food drive in San Diego County. With the cooperation of the Postal Service, they collected 155,000 pounds of food for needy working families.

Also being honored is the San Diego Construction & Building Trades Council, which helped to bring into being a neighborhood computer lab—the International Learning Center—at the National City Park Apartments. The Construction and Building Trades Council took a leadership role in promoting this project and enlisted the help of local unions who gathered donations.

The computer center has a bank of personal computers that is available without cost to the adults and 800 children who live in this apartment complex. Many individuals who could not otherwise gain the computer skills they need to improve their education and job prospects will now be able to do do.

The National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 70 and the San Diego Construction & Building Trade Council are truly deserving of the award which they are receiving. I join in adding my sincere thanks to their members, and I am pleased to highlight their service with these comments in the House of Representatives.

WILLARD'S MOUNTAIN NSDAR CELEBRATES 100 YEARS OF PATRIOTISM

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 1998

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, this May, the Willard's Mountain Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution in my congressional district in upstate New York will celebrate its 100th Anniversary. For the past century, this organization has furthered the important American values of community pride and patriotism through their many civic activities and sponsorships.

I believe that promoting pride in our nation and its rich history is one of the most important endeavors we can undertake for our country and our fellow citizens, both living and deceased. It is especially crucial for our young people to develop these principles at an early age. This is why I have fought so hard to preserve the integrity of our flag through the prohibition of its desecration. Such treatment of the flag is a slap in the faces of all of the brave men and women who have dedicated